

Feminist Methods in Research and Scholarship
WST6004 Section 6004
Academic Term: Fall 2024



Instructor:

Dr Maddy Coy

Email: m.coy@ufl.edu

Office Hours: Details and location in Canvas

Course Description

Much feminist research claims to name new topics, to examine the invisible, to study the unstudied, and to ask why it had been ignored... feminism supplies the perspective and the disciplines supply the method
(Shulamit Reinharz, 1992)

This course is an introduction to critical questions about knowledge production and conducting research through a feminist lens. It provides graduate training covering a range of qualitative and quantitative research methods for giving voice to the diversity of women's experiences and those of understudied and marginalized populations, making visible the invisible and undercounted aspects of people's lives and studying intersectionality. Sessions will include an overview of feminist critiques of science and epistemologies. The framework for the course is 'research practices'; you will engage with intellectual debates about what it means to position yourself as a knower by exploring feminist epistemologies and research ethics and applying these to your own projects.

A major goal of the course is to explore issues and dilemmas with respect to giving voice to the diversity of people's experiences. In so doing, we will encourage questioning of knowledge claims and power dynamics e.g. What is the relationship of the researcher to the researched? How does the social location (gender, race, class, sexuality, ability, geography/nationality) of the researcher impact research? How have systems of domination been upheld and/or disrupted by research design and practice? How can research contribute to social change?

We will begin with examining feminist epistemologies and ethics, and move into the messy realities, tensions, challenges, and opportunities of research as a set of practices. This will involve reading empirical papers using a range of methods, reflecting on what these tell us about the *process* of research. A proportion of the course will be spent on developing your own research practices, carrying out small projects using feminist approaches to social science and humanities methods of inquiry.

WHAT TO EXPECT: We are in a new learning space together and you will bring to class your range of disciplinary 'conceptual baggage'. In the beginning of the course - and throughout - we will explore what this means for how we engage in dialogue with each other and with research participants. We will create time for discussion of any questions, doubts, or issues you are struggling with as you work through your research agenda.

All accommodations will be honored. My aim is to create a discussion space where we can engage with each other in as meaningful a way as possible remotely. This entails creating a learning space and community based on inclusion, dignity, respect, anti-racism, and freedom from discrimination.

You are encouraged to employ critical thinking and to rely on data and verifiable sources to interrogate all assigned readings and subject matter in this course as a way of determining whether you agree with classmates and/or the instructor. No lesson is intended to espouse, promote, advance, inculcate, or compel a particular feeling, perception, viewpoint, or belief.

Course Pre-Requisites / Co-Requisites

None

Course Objectives

By the end of the course, students are expected to be able to critically engage with:

- how feminist methods in research and scholarship emerged and developed in the interdisciplinary field of Women's Studies.
- feminist perspectives on research that center intersecting inequalities of gender, race, class, sexuality, citizenship status, colonization, and other systems of power.
- the relationship between feminist research principles and their translation into practice.
- real life dilemmas that arise from the process of making knowledge claims, through designing research questions, collecting and analyzing data.

You will get the most out of the course if you read the assigned texts with enough time before we meet so that you can participate in discussions.

Learning outcomes

By the end of the course, students are expected to be able to:

- draw on core conceptual frameworks in feminist theory to inform epistemology and knowledge production
- demonstrate knowledge of feminist analyses of research practice, including ethics
- recognize and use appropriate terms for different research approaches and techniques.
- develop a methodological approach for their proposed research.

These learning outcomes will be evidenced through assignments.

Materials and Supply Fees

None

Required Textbooks

All readings are in Canvas or Course Reserves. Readings are presented thematically, beginning with foundational texts. Subsequent readings have been selected to offer an overview of a particular approach and/or an example of a study that has used it. You might find some papers more relevant to your research interests and I encourage you to engage closely with these. Which readings we will discuss each week will be posted in Canvas. We may find new, exciting papers during the semester and decide to read these in addition to or instead of the texts below.

Class resources, announcements, updates, and assignments will also be made available through Canvas, so please check the site frequently.

Course Schedule

As we develop the course so that it speaks to your research priorities, the schedule may change. In addition, there will be sessions featuring discussions with feminist scholars which will be based on their availability. This means that the outline below may be adapted as we move through the different topics. All changes in the syllabus will be posted in Canvas.

		READING/MATERIALS
Week 1 27 th August	Welcome, introductions and discussion of your proposed research projects/agendas. Introduce terms and concepts – epistemology, ontology, reflexivity	Please listen to the ' <i>What does feminist research really look like?</i> ' podcast from Gender and Development (link in Canvas).
Week 2 3 rd September	Ourselves as Knowers	Readings in Canvas
Week 3 10 th September	Feminisms and Epistemologies	Readings in Canvas
Week 4 17 th September	Making methodological decisions	Readings in Canvas EPISTEMOLOGY ANALYSIS PAPER DUE
Week 5 24 th September	Introduction into qualitative methods in feminist scholarship	Readings in Canvas READING REFLECTION DUE
Week 6 1 st October	Photovoice and Oral History	Reading options in Canvas.
Week 7 8 th October	Ethics and ethical dilemmas	Readings in Canvas READING REFLECTION DUE
Week 8 15 th October	Ethnography	Readings in Canvas.
Week 9 22 nd October	Media analysis	Readings in Canvas
Week 10 29 th October	Archival research	Readings in Canvas

Week 11 5 th November	Analysis and interpretation	Readings in Canvas
Week 12 12 th November		For this week, you will vote as a class on what we read about and discuss. The options are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participatory research • Curating/chronicling existing knowledges • Creative approaches to feminist research and knowledge production
Week 13 19 th November	Surveys and experiments	Readings in Canvas INDEPENDENT RESEARCH PROJECT DUE
Week 14 26 th November	FALL BREAK	
Week 15 3 rd December	Closing discussion	FINAL PAPER DUE

Assignment details

There are five assignments for this course. We will discuss the format and content of each in depth during classes. The assignments are intended to allow you to tailor your individual work to your own research agendas, while also sharing key aspects of the learning process with your class colleagues.

Submitting written work

All written work should be typed, double-spaced, with a 12-point font. Please use a reasonable margin (e.g., 1-1.25 inches). Submit everything via Canvas.

Participation (10%)

Part of your grade for the course is for your active participation in the class discussions. Each week I will give you all some starting points to think about for the readings, and we will begin with exploring these together. For most sessions, I will also have some material to present about the theme or method we are working on that week. The later section of the class will be an in-depth conversation based on questions and discussion points from the readings/materials. I recognize that not everyone is equally comfortable with public speaking or group discussions, so there are multiple and different ways to achieve your participation points. There are no hard and fast rules about what number of contributions you will need to make to score full points. I prefer that you demonstrate commitment to the learning space by showing that you have completed the readings and thought about their content. For example, the classroom is a space to ask questions about anything that was unclear, and to identify possible connections between readings/materials and your research projects. Missing class, or being present without having completed the readings, will clearly affect your capacity to fully participate.

Epistemology analysis paper (20%)

You will write a short reflection paper on the readings about feminist epistemologies. At the outset of the course, we will read several texts on feminist epistemologies. For this assignment you will prepare a short summary of at least FOUR of these readings (200-250 words) written in the style of an annotated bibliography, and a longer reflection (approximately 750 words) where you synthesize the main arguments and points of agreement and contestation. In other words, put these readings in conversation with each other. Where do you find consensus? Where does each reading build on and/or challenge the others? In what ways do their different perspectives help you understand core themes of feminist epistemologies? How can you identify key features of feminist approaches to knowing? This paper, combining your summaries and reflection, should be submitted in Canvas.

Reflections on methods and ethics (four short papers @ 5 points, total 20%)

You will submit four short reflections and analyses about the specific methods and research approaches that we discuss on the course. The guiding prompt for the papers is 'how do these texts add to my understanding of feminist approaches to knowledge production?'.

Each paper is to be 500 words, will engage thoughtfully with the assigned readings for that week, and will demonstrate understanding of the implications for each method/approach for feminist research. You can choose to focus in depth on one reading or discuss more than one. Try to find connections and themes between the texts to deepen your analysis. The papers will be submitted by the end of the relevant week; late papers may not receive full credit.

The two topics that must be addressed are weeks 5 and 7 (introduction to qualitative methods, and ethics). In addition, you can choose two topics that are most interesting to you, or most relevant to your research, from: photovoice and oral history; media analysis; archival research; surveys and experiments. More details and expectations will be discussed in class.

The two topics that must be addressed are weeks 5 and 7 (introduction to qualitative methods, and ethics). In addition, you can choose two topics that are most interesting to you, or most relevant to your research, from: photovoice and oral history; media analysis; archival research; surveys and experiments. More details and expectations will be discussed in class.

Independent research project (20%)

This assignment offers you an opportunity to conduct a small research project, testing out a method and refining your own research processes. This approach might not necessarily be the same as your planned research project but is an opportunity to explore or develop a technique. If you would like to pursue a different research exercise than those below, please talk with me to see if we can make it possible within the course parameters and our combined resources.

Choose ONE from the following options. Full details for each option, including the specific requirements/steps and format for the paper you will submit, will be in Canvas.

- Interview project and data analysis
- Photovoice project and data analysis
- Analysis of a text (e.g., poem, novel, memoir)
- A proposal for curation/chronicling of existing knowledge(s)
- Archival project
- Focus group and data analysis
- Online survey and data analysis.

Final paper on incorporating feminist research into your projects (30%)

You will prepare a final paper that sets out how feminist research approaches will inform (or not) your studies. This may vary according to your field and topic, and whether you have a distinct project in mind. For example, the paper will in some way how your research will illuminate the intersection of gender, race, class, and/or more axes of difference and power. All papers will include reflections on feminist epistemology, methodological decision-making, analysis and interpretation. Drawing on the course texts for these topics is essential. Your goals are to demonstrate thorough understanding of how feminist theory underpins feminist research, and how these have informed (or not) your graduate research project. More details about format and expectations will be discussed in class.

Evaluation of Grades

Assignment	Points	Percentage of Final Grade
Participation	10	10%
Epistemology analysis paper	20	20%
Independent research project	20	20%
Reading reflection paper x 4	20	20%
Final paper	30	30%
TOTAL	100	100%

FINAL GRADE

At the end of the semester, final grades will be determined by the following formula:

94 and more points = A	80-83 points = B-	67-69 points = D+
90-93 points = A-	77-79 points = C+	64-66 points = D
87-89 points = B+	74-76 points = C	60-63 points = D-
84-86 points = B	70-73 points = C-	59 and fewer points = E

In cases where the number of points falls in between letter grades, points will be rounded to the nearest whole number.

More information on UF grading policy may be found at: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies>

CONSIDER ADDING A CERTIFICATE IN WOMEN'S STUDIES: If you are taking this course, you are likely only 9 credits away from earning a Certificate (12 credits total) that will appear on your transcript and can be listed on your CV. The *Certificate in Women's Studies* (WST) is designed for graduate students from any discipline who wish to become acquainted with various feminist (and other appropriate) theoretical approaches and methodologies for examining the roles and intersections of gender, race/ethnicity, sexualities and other sociocultural systems. All graduate students in an MA or PhD program from all colleges at UF are eligible to enroll in this program. You can also do a Certificate in *Gender and Development*. For more information see the Center webpage about Certificates and the 2024-2025 Graduate Handbook. Also feel free to contact Dr Broad, graduate coordinator, with any questions.

COURSE POLICIES

Students Requiring Accommodations

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the disability Resource Center by visiting <https://disability.ufl.edu/students/get-started/>. This class supports the needs of different learners; it is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs as early as possible in the semester.

Title IX and Gender Equity

Title IX is a federal law that requires officials with the authority to take action, to report violations of the gender equity policy. Officials with authority must report these violations to the Title IX Coordinator or their deputies. The obligation to report applies whenever an Official with Authority receives, in the course and scope of employment, information about the alleged misconduct and policy violation. The report must include all information known to the employee which would be relevant to an investigation or redress of the incident, including whether the alleged victim has expressed a desire for confidentiality. The Office for Accessibility and Gender Equity provides support to anyone affected by sexual or gender-based misconduct, harassment, or discrimination. **Please know that your instructor in this course is considered an Official with Authority who is required to report violations of the gender equity policy.**

You can also find details of specialist support services at the end of the syllabus. You might not need them, but you might know someone who does.

Recording of class lectures

Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor.

A "class lecture" is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session.

Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To "publish" means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or

discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Policy on Course Syllabi 3 UF, Academic Affairs, August 5th, 2021 Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.

Procedure for conflict resolution

Any classroom issues, disagreements or grade disputes should be discussed first between the instructor and the student. If the problem cannot be resolved, please contact the Graduate Coordinator (Dr. Broad: klbroad@ufl.edu). Be prepared to provide documentation of the problem, as well as all graded materials for the semester. Issues that cannot be resolved departmentally will be referred to the University Ombuds Office (<http://www.ombuds.ufl.edu>; 352-392-1308) or the Dean of Students Office (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu>; 352-392-1261).

Course Evaluation

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at gatorevals.ua.ufl.edu/students. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via ufl.bluera.com/ufl/. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at gatorevals.ua.ufl.edu/public-results/.

University Honesty Policy

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." The Honor Code (sccr.dso.ufl.edu/process/student-conduct-code/) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor.

Student Privacy

There are federal laws protecting your privacy with regards to grades earned in courses and on individual assignments. For more information, please see: <https://registrar.ufl.edu/ferpa.html>

CAMPUS RESOURCES

Health and Wellness

U Matter, We Care:

If you or a friend is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu or 352 392-1575 so that a team member can reach out to the student.

Counseling and Wellness Center: <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc>, and 392-1575; and the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.

UF Health Shands Emergency Room / Trauma Center: For immediate medical care call 352-733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608; Visit the UF Health Emergency Room and Trauma Center website.

GatorWell Health Promotion Services: For prevention services focused on optimal wellbeing, including Wellness Coaching for Academic Success, <https://gatorwell.ufsa.ufl.edu/> or call 352-273-4450

University Police Department at 392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies), or <http://www.police.ufl.edu/>

Specialist support

Office of Victim Services

<https://police.ufl.edu/divisions/behavioral-services/office-of-victim-services/>. Located at 1515 Museum Road, (352) 392-5648 (Monday – Friday, 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.) (352) 392-1111 (24 hour support).

Alachua County Victim Services & Rape Crisis Center

<https://alachuacounty.us/Depts/CSS/VictimServices/pages/victimservices.aspx> and 352-264-6760
24 hour helpline

Peaceful Paths Domestic Violence Agency, <https://www.peacefulpaths.org/> and 352-377-8255 (24 hour helpline)

Academic Resources

E-learning technical support: Contact the UF Computing Help Desk at 352-392-4357 or via e-mail at helpdesk@ufl.edu.

Career Connections Center: Reitz Union Suite 1300, 352-392-1601. Career assistance and counseling services. <https://career.ufl.edu/>

Library Support: Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources. <https://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask>

Teaching Center: Broward Hall, 352-392-2010 or to make an appointment 352- 392-6420.
General study skills and tutoring. <https://teachingcenter.ufl.edu/>

Writing Studio: 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers. <https://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/>

Student Complaints On-Campus: [Visit the Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code webpage for more information.](#)